

Lawyer Web Survey

How Can We Keep Lawyers Doing Good? Nationwide Survey to Determine Public Interest Law Recruitment/Retention Trends

WASHINGTON, Jan. 22 (AScribe Newswire) -- Pity the "poor" lawyer. That is, the lawyer who serves the poor and disenfranchised. Although the cause is just, the less than \$40K starting salary reflects no equality in the marketplace and the law school loan can be larger than a mortgage. Public interest and government sector employers fear that these barriers will turn too many young attorneys away from the battleground of equal justice and their departure will place the American justice system in crisis.

To determine if and why lawyers will stay with or leave public interest law, on February 8, 2002 the National Association for Public Interest Law (NAPIL) and the National Legal Aid and Defender Association will launch an online survey at <http://www.napil.org/>. The survey is designed to gauge the level of the judicial and educational debt crises. Results of the survey, which is expected to collect responses from more than 1,000 legal services employers, attorneys general, public defenders and local civil liberties law organizations, will be released in April at the annual meeting of the National Association for Law Placement.

NAPIL Associate Sheila Siegel, Esq., the survey project manager, noted, "After an attorney's first year of public interest employment, we have no idea about who continues in the field, who leaves and why. Our results will be brand new data that can fuel solutions to the 'pricing out' of a lawyer's public interest law options due to low salaries and enormous law school loan payments."

The National Association for Public Interest Law leads the country in organizing, training and supporting public service-minded law students and in creating summer and postgraduate public interest jobs that bring equal justice to millions of low-income persons and families.

More information is available at www.napil.org.